



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

NMFS ANNOUNCES A PROPOSED RULE REGARDING THE RENEWAL OF ATLANTIC TUNAS LONGLINE PERMITS, AND ATLANTIC SHARK IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to amend the regulations governing the renewal of Atlantic tunas longline limited access permits (LAPs) and Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop attendance requirements.

This proposed rule would remove the one-year renewal timeframe for Atlantic tunas longline LAPs. It would allow for the renewal of the permit by the most recent permit holder of record if it had been expired for more than one year, provided that the associated swordfish and shark LAPs have been maintained through timely renewal and other current permit renewal requirements are met. This action would not amend current regulations which specify that only persons holding non-expired swordfish and shark LAPs in the preceding year are eligible to renew those permits. Also, the requirement to possess swordfish and shark LAPs in order to obtain an Atlantic tunas LAP would remain in effect.

This rule also proposes a minor modification to the Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop attendance requirements for businesses issued Atlantic shark dealer permits that have more than one dealer location listed on their dealer permit. NMFS is proposing that shark dealers must submit for permit renewal, and later display, an Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop certificate (dealer or proxy) for each place of business where Atlantic sharks are first received, rather than from each location listed on the Atlantic shark dealer permit. Additionally, NMFS proposes to require that extensions of a dealer's business, such as trucks and other conveyances must possess a copy of a valid dealer or proxy certificate issued to a place of business covered by the dealer permit.

Public hearings for this proposed rule will be conducted at the following times and locations:

May 1, 2008, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m., NMFS Northeast Regional Office, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

May 6, 2008, 6 - 8 p.m., NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, FL 33701

May 7, 2008, 3 - 5 p.m., NOAA Auditorium, 1301 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

NMFS invites comments from interested parties on this proposed rule. The comment period closes on May 12, 2008. Comments should be submitted to: NMFS HMS Management Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St, Petersburg, FL 33701. Please mark the outside of the envelope, "Comments on Proposed Tuna Permits/Shark Workshop Rule." Comments may also be submitted via facsimile (FAX) to (727) 824-5398. Finally, written comments, identified by "RIN 0648-AW46", may be submitted electronically via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at



<http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments received are a part of the public record and will be generally posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (e.g., name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Please, do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information or a copy of the proposed rule, please contact Richard A. Pearson at 727-824-5399.



Alan Risenhoover, Director
Office of Sustainable Fisheries

APR 11 2008

Date

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